

## GROUND RULES

A grief support group is an important part of grief work. By being here and actively participating in this safe environment, you'll learn to better understand your emotions, gain coping skills, and make new friends. In short, active participation will reward you in the end. To help the group run smoothly and be a process that benefits everyone, it's imperative for everyone to understand and agree to the etiquette rules below.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Nobody likes to be the brunt of gossip. To help fellow participants feel safe when divulging personal emotions and experiences, **keep what you hear confidential**. This confidentiality also extends to personal information.

### ADVICE

This support group is about sharing emotions and experiences, not advice. While it's human nature to try to help others, advice can be unwelcome, even if we think it's helpful. **Please refrain from giving advice, or starting any sentence with, "You should . . ."**

### JUDGMENT

When we judge someone's reaction or thought process, we imply superiority. Acceptance of our differences and respect for one another's opinion is critical to our own learning. Seek to understand rather than persuade. **Suspend judgment during group sessions.**

### PROFANITY

Offensive language isn't necessary to get one's point across. To be sensitive to those around you, **please refrain from using profanity and slurs.**

### LISTENING

Holding the space for one another and listening is as important as speaking. Active listening helps us learn from one another. When we're not listening, we rob ourselves of an opportunity to understand and learn new insights. **Please refrain from interrupting or having side discussions. Also, please turn off cell phone ringers unless it's critical for it to be on.**

### SENSITIVITY

One's perspective is influenced by beliefs and experiences. Appreciate the value of people who share a different belief, and **be respectful of their experiences.**

### HONESTY

Honesty is the foundation of this support group. When one isn't being honest, they cause others to question their own experiences and emotions. When we are honest about our own emotions and struggles, we validate our own experience. **Speak from the heart about your experiences.**